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# GOP split perils bill to fight Latin terror

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The Reagan administration's request for \$54 million to help Central American countries fight terrorism is in trouble, according to congressional sources.

Supporters and opponents of the aid request yesterday said divisions among Senate Republicans make it almost certain that the program won't be approved as requested.

"There is no way we can get it through without the Republicans," a Senate aide said.

Sources said Republican Sens. Nancy L. Kassebaum of Kansas, Charles McC. Mathias of Maryland and Daniel J. Evans of Washington, all of whom serve on the Foreign Relations Committee, have strong reservations about the request.

Spokesmen for Mr. Mathias and Mr. Evans confirmed that both have concerns about the measure, but said neither had yet made up his mind. Mrs. Kassebaum could not be reached for comment, and an aide did not return several calls.

In addition, congressmen on both sides of the aisle said they will raise a number of questions at separate hearings scheduled this morning by the foreign relations committees of both houses about how the anti-terrorism money will be used.

A spokesman for Rep. Olympia J. Snowe, Washington Republican, said she is among those who have concerns about the bill.

Elliot Abrams, assistant secretary of state for inter-American affairs, was scheduled to testify at the Senate hearing today. But Senate aides said late yesterday that they had been told he had been summoned to Geneva by Secretary of State George Shultz and would not testify.

The abrupt action led to speculation that some sort of deal involving Central America might be in the works at the summit meeting. President Reagan has said he plans to raise the issue of regional conflicts, including Nicaragua, in the two days of talks he begins today with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev.

That speculation could not be con-

firmed last night, but aides said Mr. Abram's absence would not help the counter-terrorism bill's chances, since a number of senators were planning to question him.

The administration asked for the funds in October after a number of terrorist attacks in Central America, including the slaying in June of four U.S. Marines at a sidewalk cafe in San Salvador.

It proposed that the money be used for equipment and training in El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Costa Rica and Panama. Of the \$54 million total, \$27 million would be allocated to military counterterrorism programs, \$26 million to civilian programs and \$1 million to a witness-protection program.

But Democratic and Republican aides in both houses said yesterday that they doubt the administration will get the amount it has requested in the present form. Proposals are being considered to cut Guatemala and Panama out of the package and to drop the military portion.

Although representatives of the State Department and the Central Intelligence Agency gave members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee a secret briefing on terrorism and the administration request yesterday, the briefing did not satisfy some senators.

A spokeswoman for Mr. Evans said, "He wants more facts before he makes up his mind and he hopes he will get them at the hearing."

Sources described yesterday's briefing as lackluster and said that the administration officials contradicted each other on some points.

Those who have expressed doubts about the package raise a number of concerns, including:

- Suspicion that it is in part a "back door" attempt to increase military aid to the region.

- Fear that it could lead to abusive

police practices, such as were alleged to have occurred under a police training program terminated in the mid-1970s.

- Concern that it might lead to further U.S. involvement.

But supporters say those who raise these question simply oppose the administration's Central America policy.

"Things have been so quiet on the administration's policy in recent months that a number of critics have been trying to find some issue to focus on," one aide said. "And this is it."

Republicans are split on how they rate the effectiveness of the administration's lobbying for the measure.

"They haven't been serious about this request," one said. "They haven't been up here lobbying. . . . This is just another way the administration is letting the Democrats stomp all over us."

But another said the administration "put a great deal of effort" into pushing the legislation.

An administration official said it is "absolutely not true" that the measure has not been backed.